

Have Monster, Will Travel
Episode 11: The Bloodskipper

(The 1996 GMC Safari, en route.)

Willis. **RENDER**

mmm ... **RILEY**

Bruce? **RENDER**

I don't know ... **RILEY**

Bruce Willis. **RENDER**

There already is a Bruce Willis. **RILEY**

But is he well known? **RENDER**

He plays Bruno the Kid ... in Bruno to the Kid! **TAIWAN**

My previous owner's kid loves that movie.

Oh. **RENDER**

RILEY
Crypto-Curious, sometimes it can be hard to pass the time on a road trip. I mean, you can only play so many hours of I-Spy before wanting to stab your eyes out ... with something green.

RENDER
Billy Bob?

RILEY
No.



Bobby Bill?
RENDER

No!
RILEY

William Robert?
RENDER

But today we are filling the time with a little bit of an identity crisis.
RILEY

A little bit!
RENDER

We're spiraling, Crypto-Curious.
RILEY

Riley - I am not spiraling. I'm just picking a new name ... And it has to happen before we get to the lake!
RENDER

Well not to pressure you, but we're almost there.
RILEY

That does pressure me!
RENDER

Render -
RILEY

Don't call me that.
RENDER

What is wrong with your name?
RILEY

Well, for one, I didn't pick it.
RENDER

Most people don't pick their own name.
RILEY



RENDER

Taiwan 1000 picked his.

TAIWAN

To commemorate the destruction of the human race.

RENDER

It's a great name.

TAIWAN

Thank you, but I already knew that.

RILEY

I like your name.

RENDER

I know you do.

Riley. When you named me, you had no idea what I was. But now, I do know. And like, Render the Rubilee? Does that even sound right?

RILEY

Render ...

(RENDER growls.)

Sorry. Sorry. Look, if this is important to you, why don't you take your time and think about it.

RENDER

And what, just not have a name! No. It has to happen now. And it has to be unique.

Regis Philbin.

RILEY

That's already a person.

RENDER

Really? Uh ... Sally ... Jessy ... Raphael!

RILEY

That one's also taken.

RENDER

Oh come on, quick hogging all the good names, lady.



[panicking:] uh. uh. uh. Engelbert Humperdinck!

(RENDER is panting, exhausted.)

RILEY

You're not gonna like this.

RENDER

Taken?

RILEY

There are two of them.

RENDER

How!

TAIWAN

If you like, I could do an internet search for top 100 monster names.

RENDER

Could you? That would be so helpful.

RILEY

Taiwan 1000, you have the internet?

TAIWAN

Uh, yeah. 100 monster names, coming right up. Just let me ask Jeeves ...

He's not in right now.

RILEY

I just don't know if you're going to be happy with anything when you're speeding thru it like this.

(Police Siren.)

Oh no, was I speeding.

No. It's a 35 mile per hour zone.

Crap. Alright, get in the back and hide.

(RENDER squirms into the way back.)



RILEY (cont.)

Are you under your blankets?

RENDER

Hold on, they're twisted.

RILEY

Faster please.

RENDER

Ok, I'm good.

RILEY

Alright, I'm pulling over.

(RILEY stops the Safari. She digs thru the dash.)

TAIWAN

Riley, you want me to incapacitate him?

RILEY

Not a word from either one of you!

(SHERIFF PINKERTON approaches RILEY'S window.)

PINKERTON

Afternoon.

RILEY

Hi.

PINKERTON

License, Registration, Proof of Insurance.

RILEY

Sure.

(RILEY hands it over.)

Is there something wrong, Officer?

PINKERTON

Sheriff.



RILEY

Oh, sorry, Sheriff -

PINKERTON

Pinkerton. Sheriff Pinkerton.

Any idea how fast you were going?

RILEY

35?

PINKERTON

I clocked you at 34.

RILEY

The speed limit's 35, I thought.

PINKERTON

Well, that's what the sign says. But people around here understand that if says 35, it really means 25.

RILEY

But it says 35?

PINKERTON

We're a small community. Where you're from, maybe it's customary to rip up and down like a rocketship, but here - we like to look after one another.

RILEY

Are you writing me a ticket?

PINKERTON

Only way to learn.

RILEY

You couldn't just let me off with a warning.

PINKERTON

Well ... we find it's better if you just pay the fine.

RILEY

For doing 34 in a 35?

PINKERTON

Hey - you are well within your rights to contest it.



PINKERTON (cont.)

They close early on Fridays, but Monday morning you can go one down to the County Clerk's office and run them thru your whole "34 in a 35" story.

Lord knows it won't be the first time somebody's tried that defense.

(Ripping the ticket off his pad.)

Here ya go.

(appraising the Safari:)

Lot of room for one person. Kind of a mess in the back.

RILEY

Camping! Camping gear, mostly.

PINKERTON

... You planning on camping around here?

RILEY

Down on the lake.

PINKERTON

Got a tag?

RILEY

For ...

PINKERTON

Gotta have a tag to camp on the lake. Go on down to the stop sign, turn right. Two miles down there's a Conoco station. You can give them your five dollars, register your campsite and they'll give you a tag.

RILEY

Uh. Thank you, Sheriff.

PINKERTON

People around here call me Pinky. Here's your license ... Katherine. Have a nice time camping.

And slow it down, will ya?

(PINKERTON leaves. RILEY waits, and sighs a big breath of relief.)



RENDER

Who's Katherine?

RILEY

Oh ... you know. That's my real name.

RENDER

Are you kidding!

(THEME SONG.)

(Back in the Safari. RENDER is snickering over something.)

Are we recording?

RILEY

Yeah. You ok?

(RENDER is absolutely tickled pink.)

RENDER

I just forget how bad it is.

I can't. You read it.

RILEY

I'm driving. Get it together.

RENDER

Ok. Well, can you set it up for me?

RILEY

Crypto-Curious. After many miles and many adventures we have arrived at the location of the third clue from the Aghast! Menagerie. A large, pristine lake nestled between verdant, rolling hills.

RENDER

Blue skies. Clear water. Two thumbs up.

RILEY

Tucked away next to a sleepy little town where, trust me, nothing moves too quickly.

But don't let the scenery lull you, because this lake holds a dark secret.



BOTH

The Bloodskipper.

TAIWAN

Wait - are you guys speaking in unison. I wasn't ready.

ALL THREE

... The Bloodskipper.

TAIWAN

I never know when you two are going to do that.

RENDER

Sorry!

RILEY

The Bloodskipper, which sounds sinister ... however -

(RENDER snickers.)

There's something we've not been telling you.

Brondon Fennimore, the late, great author of the Aghast! Menagerie ... is a terrible writer.

These are his, unedited notes on the Bloodskipper:

RENDER

Ok. Ok. Keep it together.

(Deep Breath.)

"The Bloodskipper.

Imagine if a mudskipper and a push mower made out so hard that their braces stuck together. This menacing creature, which resembles an inflatable pool shark with a circular maw of scissor-action teeth, is a fast-gliding lake skimmer that feeds along the shoreline, clearcutting everything in its path.

The bloodskipper is most active around dusk but bring binoculars as you'll want to keep well clear of the water."

RILEY

And then there's a drawing that ... Crypto-Curious, your own mother wouldn't put this on the fridge.



RENDER

Oo - there's also the map.

RILEY

Right - a hand-drawn map of the lake which shows the location of the best camping spot to witness the Bloodskipper, which is pretty helpful since we are pulling up the Conoco station now.

Ok. I'll be right back.

RENDER

Want the map?

RILEY

Yeah. Thanks.

You two need anything?

RENDER

Something blue.

RILEY

Like ... a drink? Gummies?

RENDER

Something blue, please.

RILEY

Got it. Taiwan 1000?

TAIWAN

If they've got anything made out of crushed and ground up human remains.

RILEY

And if they don't have that?

TAIWAN

Oh ... Salt and vinegar chips.

RILEY

Right. Be right back.

(RILEY exits the Safari.)

TAIWAN

What about something with a number in it?

RENDER

Huh?

TAIWAN

I like a name that has a big, round number in it.

RENDER

I don't know if that sounds like me ...

TAIWAN

Eh. You'll find it.

(The Gas Station.)

PINKERTON

Afternoon.

RILEY

Um. Hello again.

PINKERTON

Help you with anything?

RILEY

You also work here?

PINKERTON

Oh - you must be talking about my twin brother. You met the Sheriff, huh?

RILEY

Yeah. He pulled me over.

PINKERTON

Speeding?

RILEY

34 in a 35.

PINKERTON

That sounds like my brother. He's kind of an odd duck.

RILEY

Yeah, seemed that way.

PINKERTON

I mean, who gives out speeding tickets for going under?

RILEY

That's what I'm saying.

PINKERTON

Still, I suppose every family's got one.

RILEY

Tell me about it.

(PINKERTON slams his hand down on the counter.)

PINKERTON

I'm just kidding, I have no twin brother!

RILEY

Aaaah! Why would you do that?

PINKERTON

We're a small town, we get in our laughs where we can.

[genial:] Have a look around. Holler if you have any questions.

RILEY

[under her breath:] ugh. get me out of here.

(RILEY goes to grab chips and "something blue")

CUSTOMER

Hey Pinky, how fresh are these night crawlers?

PINKERTON

Pretty fresh.

(CUSTOMER approaches the counter.)

CUSTOMER

I just come from the diner. Tammy had a fella today, tried to pay her in gold coins, you believe that?

PINKERTON

Believe it? Look at this -

(Gold coins rattle on the countertop.)

He just filled up a minute ago.

CUSTOMER

And you let him pay with these?

PINKERTON

I'd have paid for that man's gas just to hold 'em.

You think they're real?

CUSTOMER

I don't know.

PINKERTON

They look real to me.

CUSTOMER

Well, they're supposed to look real, that's the whole point.

PINKERTON

Maybe. Still, kinda nice.

CUSTOMER

Yeah ... Alright - I'll catch up with ya tomorrow. See ya, Pinky.

PINKERTON

Take it slow.

CUSTOMER

You too.

(CUSTOMER exits. RILEY steps up to the counter.)

PINKERTON

This all?

RILEY

And the camping tag.



PINKERTON

Right! Registration book's right there.

(RILEY pulls out her map.)

RILEY

You know of any good camping spots close to this?

(RILEY slides her map over.)

PINKERTON

Sure do, but it's taken for the weekend - people come here for the peace and quiet, we try not to overcrowd them.

But if you're wanting a good view of the lake, there's a good spot not too far.

(RILEY takes the registration book.)

RILEY

Is this the other camper?

PINKERTON

Showed up this morning. Pulled up to the dock in this little pontoon boat, going nice and slow, no wake, no loud music, nice fella.

(Sliding the coin over)

This look real to you?

RILEY

I don't know.

PINKERTON

Looks real to me.

Cash or card?

(The Safari. RILEY climbs back in.)

RILEY

You're not going to believe who's here.

RENDER

Well hello, Katherine.



RILEY

Ok. I deserved that.

(RILEY climbs in. She takes a second to get settled. Finally:)

My full name is Katherine Riley. They named me after mom, but my whole life I've always gone by Riley.

When Mom died, it felt weird no longer having a Katherine in the family so I started going by Riley Kate, but it just ... never really felt right. Like I was trying to fill a very big hole with something small.

I'm sorry I wasn't hearing you today. You haven't had one quiet moment to yourself since finding out you were a Rubilee, no moment to just sit and be with your thoughts.

You're still figuring out who you are. And I think that's great.

You take as much time as you need. I love you no matter who you are. And whatever name you decide on is going to be perfect.

(They sit for a moment, thinking.)

And not to add too much more to your plate ...

Bunion's here.

(from the back:)

TAIWAN

Can I have my crushed-up human snack?

(The Lake.)

RENDER

This is perfect!

RILEY

I think so.

RENDER

If Bunion's here, then that means the Menagerie is here.

RILEY

And we have a map to his campsite.



RENDER

And he has no idea that we're here.

RILEY

It's the perfect storm.

RENDER

We hang out, catch a sight of the bloodskipper - maybe see if we can ride them jet skis? And then tonight, ambush the dastardly Professor Bunion and get back the menagerie.

RILEY

Well, we never really had it.

RENDER

And get, for the first time -

RILEY

I'm with you.

RENDER

This was the break we needed.

RILEY

Ok, well don't get your hopes up. We still have to do it.

TAIWAN

Yeah, stealing the menagerie is something you're actually very good at.

RILEY

Thanks Taiwan 1000.

RENDER

Oh come on, he's just doing his part. Behind every winning team there's always that one ... really disappointed Dad.

Tonight's the night - I can feel it.

How long til dusk?

RILEY

Not for a while, babe.



RENDER

Ugh, It needs to hurry up.

RILEY

That's the nice part, Sugar Bomb - days are getting longer.

Just enjoy the downtime.

RENDER

How can I enjoy the downtime when Professor Bunion is literally right over there with possible answers to who I am?

RILEY

Well you can't move the sun faster.

RENDER

But I want to.

Riley, make the sun go away.

(RILEY places a calming hand on RENDER.)

RILEY

Hey. You just have to wait.

RENDER

It doesn't feel fair.

RILEY

I know.

RENDER

I'm tired of having to wait to learn who I am.

RILEY

I know.

But we can't control that. Take a deep breath.

(They breathe.)

And another.

(They breathe.)

RILEY (cont.)

You see that big open sky? And that big yellow sun? And all that big blue water?

It sucks to have to sit and wait, but that's what places like this were made for. Maybe this is the perfect place for you to be right now: next to the water, watching the cloud slowly move past.

Maybe it's a good thing that we've got a little daylight left.

(They take one more deep breath together.)

TAIWAN

Hey. What's that blurry thing on the opposite shore?

(The TRIO stand and look.)

RILEY

It's moving fast.

RENDER

That's a bloodskipper.

RILEY

We don't know that.

TAIWAN

What else could that be?

RENDER

Look at the distance it's covering. It's already making it around to our side.

RILEY

Ok. Let's get away from the shore.

RENDER

It looks huge from here.

RILEY

Hey, get away from the water.

RENDER

I'm gonna move in time.

TAIWAN

You sure?

RENDER

Aaah!

(RENDER jumps back as something large and fast zooms by in a gust of wind.)

RILEY, TAIWAN

Whoa! AAha!

RENDER

That was wild!

TAIWAN

Looks like it's doubling back.

RILEY

Can you please come away from the water?

(The BLOODSKIPPER slides to a halt in the shallow water next to them. It snuffles in low breaths.)

RENDER

Riley ...

RILEY

Okay that's close enough.

RENDER

Look at those teeth.

RILEY

Uh, yeah. I was.

RENDER

I mean, Brondon Fennimore might be a bad writer, but I'll say this for him. He wasn't wrong.

RILEY

Looks like a big ole inflatable pool shark.

RENDER

Hi there big fella. Riley, I think it wants me to pet it.

RILEY

How could you possibly get that?



RENDER

Oh come on, it's friendly.

RILEY

Please get back up on the shore.

RENDER

Oh, you want a closer look at this one.

RILEY

I definitely do not.

(The BLOODSKIPPER retreats into the water.)

RENDER

Wait. Where are you going? It's ok. You don't have to be scared of -

(The BLOODSKIPPER lunges forward, swallowing TAIWAN 1000 in a single gulp.
Everyone screams. You get it.)

RENDER

Taiwan 1000!

TAIWAN

[inside:] Help!

RILEY

Hey - give him back!

RENDER

Don't run at it.

(The BLOODSKIPPER lunges again, swallowing RILEY. There is an appropriate amount
of alarm.)

Riley! Taiwan 1000!

RILEY

[inside:] Render! Sorry. Sorry, I know. Just a little panicked.

RENDER

You ok?

RILEY

I mean ... yes?

It's not chewing. So that's a start.

Can you pry its mouth open?

RENDER

You want me to put my hands in there?

RILEY

I would like us to be out of here!

RENDER

Let me see if I can find a branch of something.

I'll be right back.

RILEY

Don't leave.

RENDER

I need something for leverage!

(RENDER runs away from the lake, into the nearby woods. RENDER finds a large branch and rushes back towards the shore.)

(They're gone.)

Riley! Taiwan 1000!

Great. Now what?

(RENDER realizes what he has to do.)

There's only one man who can help me.

(PROFESSOR BUNION'S campsite. RENDER runs up to BUNION, who has his back turned.)

Professor! Professor! Professor ...

(RENDER grabs BUNION, spinning him around. BUNION, in shock, screams.)

RENDER (cont.)

Ok, relax Professor, it's me, it's me!

BUNION

Big guy!

RENDER

Yes! Big guy! Wait, seriously?

BUNION

No. It can't be. I just sent you back to the E-vite Horizon.

RENDER

Oh, I know. You did send me back to the E-vite Horizon, but I'm back. I'm back from the -

I'm sorry, what?

BUNION

You just left here.

RENDER

I just got here.

BUNION

No. From before.

RENDER

This is the first time I've seen you in weeks.

BUNION

No. You showed up with that crazy old man who claims to be a scientist. He had the almanac with him!

RENDER

Ok. I don't know what that is. Ignore that. I need you now. They've been eaten.

BUNION

Wait. Eaten? Big guy - where's Riley and the little guy?

RENDER

Is Riley's name the only one you know?

BUNION

I'm better at faces.

You don't know my name?
RENDER

It's embarrassing, I know.
BUNION

No. It's me! Benji!
RENDER

Oh. Benji! Of course, I remember now.
BUNION

What happened to the others.

RENDER
I can explain on the way. But first, we need your boat.

BUNION
Sure. Just as soon as you give me back the pages you stole from my book.

(Inside the BLOODSKIPPER.)

TAIWAN
Help! Get me out of here! I can't be eaten. I can't be eaten.

RILEY
Taiwan 1000, it's okay. Calm down.

TAIWAN
Calm down! Calm down! What kind of advice is that?!

We gotta get out of here - we gotta get out of here - we gotta get out of here.

I know! I'll ask Jeeves, he'll know what to do.

He's still out - where does he go?!

(The commotion upsets the BLOODSKIPPER. It lets out a deep moan.)

RILEY
You've got to get a hold of yourself.

TAIWAN

We're being devoured!

RILEY

No, we're not.

TAIWAN

Uh ... look around. We're sitting on a giant tongue!

RILEY

But we're still here. If it's not chewing, it's not eating us. And if it's not eating us, then we've still got a chance. Render's out there. He'll find us. He'll get us out.

When you're in trouble, look for a Rubilee.

(TAIWAN is breathing heavily, frantic.)

I promise you, we're ok.

TAIWAN

You don't understand. Being eaten alive ... it's like my greatest fear.

RILEY

Really?

TAIWAN

What could be worse.

RILEY

I mean ... Dad was always worried about lightning strikes and power surges.

TAIWAN

No. Believe me. There's nothing worse than being eaten alive.

RILEY

Look. I know you don't trust me. And I really don't know how to compare these things, so I won't say we've been in tougher scrapes - but we've definitely been in adjacent scrapes. You and me, we're gonna make it out of this. Together. Nobody's getting eaten today.

TAIWAN

[scared, sincerely:] But if it has to happen, you promise you'll go first.

RILEY

Hey. It's not going to come to that.

RILEY (cont.)

Come here.

(TAIWAN starts moaning distrustfully.)

I just wanna ...

(RILEY spits onto her sleeve.)

You've got ... finger smudges all over your screen.

(RILEY wipes away TAIWAN'S smudges.)

There. How's that feel?

TAIWAN

Better.

RILEY

Good. Come here.

(TAIWAN 1000 slides closer. RILEY puts her arm around him.)

I don't know how - but this is as bad as it gets today. It's all up from here.

TAIWAN

You promise?

RILEY

Yes I do.

TAIWAN

And we're getting out of here?

RILEY

If I say it's gonna happen, it's gonna happen.

(BUNION'S Pontoon Boat.)

RENDER

Does this boat go any faster?

BUNION

No it does not.

RENDER

Really? I don't wanna sound ungrateful, I just assumed that using your boat would be the fastest way to -

BUNION

Well I'm pushing her pretty hard into the red as it is.

RENDER

In my head, I was just kinda picturing this, like, daring rescue.

BUNION

Well I'm sorry my uncle Alvin's pontoon boat isn't up to your standards.

RENDER

I think I could light the candles on a birthday cake right now.

BUNION

We are cutting across the middle of the lake. That's faster than going along the shore.

RENDER

... I guess.

Maybe it's a weight thing. Should we try throwing things overboard?

BUNION

I've listened to your podcast.

RENDER

Oh ... Did you rate and review? You gotta rate and review.

BUNION

I don't like the way I'm being portrayed.

RENDER

Excuse me?

BUNION

You two portray me like I'm some sort of bumbling amateur, like I have no idea what I'm doing. People laugh at me.

RENDER

Not to your face, we don't.

BUNION

On the forums. You two have completely destroyed my credibility.

RENDER

And you think that's an "us" thing?

BUNION

You're the amateurs, not me. I have worked for this.

RENDER

You don't think I have a right to be here? This is personal to me.

BUNION

You have no training. The only experience you have is in getting swallowed. And you're dragging me down with you.

RENDER

You don't think you'd have a little more credibility if you dropped the silly voice?

BUNION

What?

RENDER

I mean, that can't be real, right? There's no way a teacher didn't flag that.

BUNION

This is how Cryptozoologists speak! This is how we all sound.

Here, I'll show you.

(BUNION takes out his cell phone and dials. PETEY answers. His voice is atrocious.)

PETEY

Who is this?

BUNION

Sorry, new number. This is Eric McDermott -

PETEY

Big D, Two Ts!



BUNION

Petey! How's it going?

PETEY

What's that? Hold on.

BUNION

Oh, can you hear me ok? There might be some wind.

PETEY

No no - your end's crystal clear, it's me. I'm out in the field, thought I heard something.

BUNION

Out in the field?

PETEY

Can't tell you where, you understand. Been tracking a Neanderthatu for three days now - real nasty one too.

RENDER

What's a Neanderthatu?

PETEY

Whoa whoa whoa - who's there. Big D, you didn't tell me this wasn't a secure line.

BUNION

It's ok. He's with me.

PETEY

... Why's he sound like that?

BUNION

Oh! It uh ... It's like a mentorship thing.

PETEY

And he doesn't know what a Neanderthatu is? [taunting:] Warning! Get yourself a better mentor!

BUNION

We just started, that's all! A Neanderthatu is a Neanderthal Nosferatu.

RENDER

So like a vampire in a loincloth?

PETEY

Vampire in a loincloth! D, where did you find this guy, OKCryptid.com?

Kid - A Neanderthatu is a Neanderthat who has been bitten and become the undead, which is completely different and distinct from a Nosferatu that is earlier on the evolutionary timeline.

They're nothing alike!

RENDER

So ... what do you call a vampire in a loincloth?

PETEY

A Caveman Dracula.

Oh! Hey - I gotta go, it's on the move again.

BUNION

Thanks, Petey!

PETEY

Talk to you later ... Professor Bunion. Hey Kid, ask your mentor about that. Ha!

(BUNION hangs up.)

BUNION

You see? Laughing stock.

RENDER

Well, I'm sorry you're being treated like this, but that has nothing to do with us. If you know our show, then you know why we're out here. You know how important the Menagerie is to us and what it could mean for me. And you still have no interest in helping, in sharing, when it could change my life.

Who cares how our podcast portrays you - what does that say about you?

(Police sirens. Again. PINKERTON is heard coming over a megaphone.)

PINKERTON

Cut your engine and prepare to be boarded. This is the department of Fish and Wildlife.

(RENDER and BUNCION scream.)

BUNION

Get down!



(RENDER drops to the deck of the pontoon boat.)

BUNION (cont.)

Hide!

RENDER

Where? Not like there's anywhere to go.

BUNION

The bench seats up front are hollow inside. Toss out the life jackets and crawl in.

(RENDER scurries.)

PINKERTON

Cut your engine!

BUNION

Benji, you've got to hurry.

RENDER

The lid won't come down.

BUNION

Hold on ... Deep breath in.

(BUNION jump/sits on the lid and it closes, RENDER yelps. BUNION runs back and cuts the engine.)

Oh, Snobobber.

RENDER

[muffled:] Snobobber?

(PINKERTON'S boat pulls alongside.)

PINKERTON

Afternoon.

BUNION

Uh, hi there, uh -

PINKERTON

Lewis Pinkerton, Commissioner with Fish and Wildlife.

BUNION

Is there anything I can do for you -

PINKERTON

Call me, Pinky. Just a routine stop. Saw you out on the lake. Thought you might be out fishing, but nobody's bought a hunting and fishing license down at the Conoco lately.

BUNION

Oh, no - I don't hunt or fish.

PINKERTON

Lot of life jackets on the ground.

BUNION

I like having them close. Makes me feel safe.

PINKERTON

I suppose. Just make sure they don't blow away.

BUNION

It's less of an issue than you might think.

PINKERTON

You know, most people keep them up here in the -

BUNION

Wait! I wouldn't -

(PINKERTON opens the bench seat and finds RENDER.)

PINKERTON

Well, hello there.

[to BUNION:] Thought you weren't a hunter.

BUNION

Oh no I didn't! You don't understand! It's uh -

RENDER

Hi, I'm Benji.

PINKERTON

Well hello, Benji. Why don't you come on out.



(RENDER stands.)

PINKERTON (cont.)

Well aren't you tall! Better?

RENDER

I don't really like cramped spaces.

You don't seem ... to be appropriately surprised!

PINKERTON

We're a small community situated on a lake full to the brim with weird, magical creatures. We tend to keep to ourselves.

Well, nothing out of the ordinary here - you two have a pleasant afternoon.

RENDER

Actually, wait! We need your help. It's my friends. They've been eaten by a Bloodskipper.

PINKERTON

Today?

[urgently:] We haven't got long before dusk. We might be able to get to them in time.

RENDER

In time?

PINKERTON

Bloodskippers hunt for food from late afternoon thru dusk. But they're a communal creature. They don't eat until they're all back in the den together.

Which means we need to - and I don't like saying this - hurry!

Follow me! I'll lead the way to their den.

(PINKERTON boards his boat and starts his engine. He takes off and BUNION and RENDER follow.)

[shouting back:] Is that as fast as it goes?

BUNION

Uh... Yeah.

PINKERTON

I better throw you a tow line.

(PINKERTON tosses a line.)

Man, now that is slow.

(Inside the BLOODSKIPPER. RILEY and TAIWAN sit in silence. And then:)

RILEY

Hey. You feel that? It's slowing down.

TAIWAN

Yeah, I feel it.

RILEY

Maybe something's happening.

TAIWAN

I think I liked it better when nothing was happening.

Hey. Do you feel that?

RILEY

Yeah, I just said -

TAIWAN

No. Do you feel ... that?

It's faint, but ... it's a wifi signal.

RILEY

Why would I be able to feel that?

TAIWAN

I can get online. I can get us out of here. I can ask Jeeves.

RILEY

I don't know how to break this to you.

TAIWAN

No. Let me try ...

(TAIWAN, using his dial-up modem, tries to connect to the internet.)

RILEY

You still use dial-up?

(The BLOODSKIPP hates this. And starts gurgling.)

TAIWAN

Oh, it's no use.

RILEY

No, that's it. Do that again.

TAIWAN

The signal's too weak.

RILEY

Try again. Trust me.

(TAIWAN tries connecting to the internet again. The BLOODSKIPPER gurgles louder.)

I don't know what, but there must be something universally hated about that sound. Taiwan 1000, keep going.

(TAIWAN dials-up. Louder.)

TAIWAN

It's not enough.

RILEY

No. It is. And you and I are getting out of this together. Go!

(TAIWAN dial-up. RILEY joins in. Together, they screech and yelp and ba-dong ba-dong and whine. "You've Got Mail!")

(And the BLOODSKIPPER, sick to its stomach, throws them up. The tumble out, screaming.)

(The BLOODSKIPPER'S DEN.)

PINKERTON

See? What did I tell you? They're a communal creature. They don't eat until they're all back together.

BUNION

Riley, you're alive!

Bunion? **RILEY**

Benji, look! **BUNION**

Benji? **TAIWAN**

[to RENDER:] Benji? **RILEY**

Benji. **RENDER**

Benji! **RILEY and TAIWAN**

How did you find us? **RILEY**

RENDER
Professor Bunion loaned us his boat. And look who else is here!

PINKERTON
Afternoon!

RILEY
What are you doing here?

PINKERTON
Fish and Wildlife ma'am, at your service.

RILEY
Pinky! How many jobs do you have?

BUNION
It's a small town.

PINKERTON
Now listen, everybody - we're not out of this one yet. We are in the middle of a Bloodskipper den at supertime.

BUNION

Everyone! Make as much noise as you can - creatures like this will back down if we assert our dominance.

PINKERTON

No they will not.

BUNION

Okay. Well, you never know. Sometimes they do. Gotta try it.

TAIWAN

Wait - are we still getting eaten!

PINKERTON

Now now! A Bloodskipper won't let anything it brings into its den leave.

BUNION

So then the three of us are ok?

PINKERTON

Correct.

(TAIWAN moans, perhaps faints a little.)

But the good news is, a bloodskipper will trade you things. But I warn, the trade has to be good, and they can tell if it isn't. So, everybody reach into your pockets - or your bags - and pull out something that you value.

Benji, we'll start with you.

RENDER

Um ... hold on, let me get my bag.

(RENDER digs thru his bag, pulling out.)

Oh! My bottle opener.

BUNION

A bottle opener?

TAIWAN

He really loves that bottle opener.

RILEY

It's true.

PINKERTON

Already. Hold it out. Let him sniff it.

(The BLOODSKIPPER sniffs the bottle opener.)

No - he doesn't want that.

Now you?

BUNION

I don't really have anything on me of value.

(The BLOODSKIPPER snorts and shakes its head.)

Ok. Ok. I was just kidding.

(BUNION pulls out his bag and pulls out the Aghast! Menagerie.)

RILEY

[to herself:] The Menagerie!

(The BLOODSKIPPER sniffs, considers, scoffs, moves on. A COLLECTIVE sigh from everyone except PINKERTON.)

Um - all I've got on me are my car keys.

(RILEY holds out the Safari key. The BLOODSKIPPER passes on this too.)

(TAIWAN'S CD drive opens.)

TAIWAN

You can have my free AOL CD?

BUNION

America Online?

TAIWAN

What? It comes with 500 free hours.

[to RILEY:] It's the internet & more.

RILEY

I know.

(The BLOODSKIPPER turns to TAIWAN to sniff. TAIWAN gasps and the CD drive pulls back in.)

TAIWAN

Sorry. I got scared.

(The CD Drive opens again. The BLOODSKIPPER passes, moving onto PINKERTON.)

PINKERTON

Well. Must be that you're after these.

(PINKERTON holds out the two gold coins. The BLOODSKIPPER sniffs them.)

Shiny, aren't they? I hope they're real.

(The BLOODSKIPPER opens its mouth and PINKERTON tosses the coins inside.)

Alright. Looks like the trade is done. Now all of us - I can not stress this enough - back away SLOWLY.

(The GANG tiptoes back out of the BLOODSKIPPER'S DEN, back down to:)

(The Lake.)

TAIWAN

Riley! We're alive.

RILEY

See? What did I tell you?

TAIWAN

Oh ...

(TAIWAN collapses into RILEY. She strokes the top of his monitor.)

When I destroy you - I will remember this day and burn you swiftly.

RILEY

And that's really all a person could ask for.

BUNION

Benji -

RENDER

Yeah, Professor Bunion?

BUNION

I know we've had our difference, but I've been thinking a lot about what you said to me - and I just wanted to let you know ...

YOU'LL NEVER HAVE THE AGHAST! MENAGERIE!

(BUNION jumps onto his Pontoon Boat and starts it up.)

My Book! It's finally complete again!

RENDER

Is that full throttle?

BUNION

Yeah ...

RENDER

Feels like I could just walk alongside you and take it back once you get to shore.

BUNION

... But don't.

RENDER

Would this escape feel more dramatic if we couldn't talk to each other using our normal speaking voices?

BUNION

A little.

(BUNION exits.)

PINKERTON

I hate to break up a tender reunion, but we really shouldn't just hang around the mouth of a Bloodskipper den like this.

Need a ride back to camp?



RILEY

Can we take the slow way?

PINKERTON

Only way I know how.

(The GANG climb aboard PINKERTON'S boat and they shove off.)

RILEY

So. They County Clerk's office doesn't open until Monday.

PINKERTON

That's it.

RILEY

And that's where I pay the speeding fine?

PINKERTON

You got it.

RILEY

... When I get there on Monday, am I going to discover that you're the County Clerk.

PINKERTON

Please! I've got more than my fair share of jobs around this town.

Of course, Clarence is still on his honeymoon, so you will be dealing with the Deputy County Clerk.

RILEY

And that's ...

PINKERTON

Yours truly.

RILEY

Righteous.

RENDER

So ... Is Pinky like your nickname?

PINKERTON

When your last name is Pinkerton, you almost have no choice but to be called Pinky. My Daddy was called Pinky, my Granddaddy was called Pinky ... They called my Uncle Michael Stumpy -

RENDER

Uh ... was he ... missing -

PINKERTON

Fishing with dynamite.

RENDER

Oh. Sure.

And you don't mind just being given a nickname.

PINKERTON

Seems to me, that as long as someone speaks to you out of love and respect, doesn't really matter what are words are they use.

RENDER

Hmm.

(RENDER thinks on this a moment. And then:)

RILEY

[to RENDER:] You hear that, pal - two whole days with nothing to do but sit by a lake, dip our heels into the water, slow things down.

RENDER

That sounds nice.

RILEY

I thought it might.

RENDER

Hey Riley?

RILEY

Yeah, Benji.

RENDER

I think I still want to be Render.

RILEY

That's ok.

RENDER

I just don't know if a new name fits me.

RILEY

That's ok.

RENDER

I just feel like I made a big fuss over it.

RILEY

Of course. We have to make big fusses over something. That's how we know what matters.

(They sit with this for a moment. The boat chugs along.)

RENDER

But I think I want to be like "Render" with a backwards "e."

RILEY

Like, the way a kid would write it?

RENDER

Yeah. And in my head, it's in like a crayon font. I think that feels like me.

RILEY

Totally feels like you.

(RILEY and RENDER hug.)

Which E tho?

RENDER

[a sudden realization, an accusation:] My name has two Es in it?!

GAH!

RILEY

Well Crypto-Curious, seems like we need a little down time to be with our feelings.

RENDER

When were you going to tell me!

RILEY

If you're ever trapped in a tight, cramped space ... like a mouth ... or a tent ... I hope you're there with someone you love.

They make the tight spaces better.

RILEY (cont.)

We'll see ya next time on Have Monster, Will Travel.

TAIWAN

And like they say where we're from:

"The Fog! Horace, It's crawling out of the fog!"

(end of episode.)

CREDITS

JOE

Hi, this is Joe Mock. Have Monster, Will Travel features the vocal talents of Jordan Trovillion as Riley Kate, Paul Kerford Wilson as Render, Neil Batra as Taiwan 1000, Dave Powell as the Befuddled Professor Bunion -

DAVE

I get to do my voice again!

JOE

Jacob Hauser as Petey, Grayson Halonen as The Bloodskipper, Miranda Phair as “Are These Night Crawlers Fresh?” and me, Joe Mock as Sheriff Pinkerton. Special Thanks to Liam Belusso for giving today’s script a sensitivity read. Today’s episode was written by Trey Tatum and directed by Bridget Leak. Have Monster, Will Travel is a production of Queen City Flash out of Cincinnati, Ohio

More information, including transcripts can be found at QueenCityFlash.com